Queen Anne Cobblestone

The Newsletter of the Queen Anne Historical Society　　　　January 2014

Next Meeting: January 22 at St. Paul's Episcopal Church

The A-Frame under construction in 1962 with 1936 building in rear

The society will hold its January meeting on Wednesday, January 22, from 7 to 8:30 p.m. The meeting has been moved back a day to avoid conflicts with church programs.

Much as the A-Frame church conveys a distinctively modern look, St. Paul's congregation has been on the site for 111 years and in the neighborhood for about 122. Founded in 1892, St. Paul's first services took place that year in David Denny's real estate office on the corner of Queen Anne Avenue and Republican Street (site of the Mediterranean Inn).

In 1903, the 'mission,' became a 'parish' and purchased land on Roy Street for the church which was completed in 1909 and demolished in 1962 for the building now

on the site. Construction of the modern building coincided with the Century 21 Exhibition at Seattle Center. Under the leadership of John B. Lockerby, who served as the parish priest between 1958 and 1967, the congregation sold the land on Galer Street acquired for a new church and chose to remain an urban church.

The Queen Anne Historical Society's meeting on Wednesday, January 22, will explore the history of St. Paul's before and after 1962 to understand the unintended architectural irony of choosing an A-Frame design, the quintessential 1950s-1960s suburban church type, for a church committed to staying close to urban populations in need.

Queen Anne Library Centennial Celebration

On January 1, 1914, the Queen Anne Branch of the Seattle Public Library opened its doors for the very first time. In celebration, the public is invited to the 100th anniversary party from 2 to 4 p.m. Sunday, January 12, at the branch.

Constructed with funds donated by millionaire steel baron Andrew Carnegie, the library reflects the Pennsylvania philanthropist's ideas of how a public library should work. Its brightly lit spaces shared between a reading room, a children's room and general collections were all part of the formula. The bright spaces metaphorically echoed the Carnegie motto Fiat Lux (Let There Be Light) that is carved into corbeled brackets just inside the library doors. Setting the primary spaces on a platform high above a community room echoes Carnegie's thoughts.

The other key philanthropist in ensuring the library got built was Alden J. Blethen, owner and publisher of *The Seattle Times*

beginning in 1896. Blethen lived on Queen Anne at W. Highland Drive and 6th W. Without his last-minute gift to buy the land on which the library sits, the city would have forfeited Carnegie's award.

Alden J. Blethen's descendants Frank A. Blethen, publisher of *The Seattle Times*, and his nephew Ryan Blethen, a Queen Anne neighbor and the paper's associate publisher, will attend the centennial celebration. Mayor Ed Murray may also attend. All activities are free and open to the public. As part of its centennial celebration, the library is asking neighbors to share their stories about the branch. People can use specially designed scrapbook paper available now at the branch to share their stories, which will be included in a scrapbook on display during the celebration along with historical photos of the branch. People can also email stories now to carnegiememories@spl.org for inclusion in the scrapbook.

CHECK OUR WEBSITE

We continue to improve our website (www.qahistory.org), including better organization of our historical database and images. You can also "like" us on Facebook and "follow" us on Twitter.

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McGraw Cottage at Seattle Children's Home
By Michael Herschensohn, PhD

It looks like a historic building that tells an important story about orphaned and troubled youth has been saved. McGraw Cottage is the 1905 Colonial Revival style building of the Seattle Children's Home at the southwest corner of W. McGraw and 10th Ave. W. It survives to document how Seattle has cared for children in need for well over 100 years.

The home's history, its changes in use and the May 3, 1884, founding of the Ladies Relief Society (which created the Seattle Children's Home) reflect the history of women in modern society as much as changes in how we care for children in need.

During the American Renaissance, the period between 1876 and World War I, wealthy well-connected women and their clubs were largely responsible for the country's charity work. This period in American history is also marked by an increasing awareness of the huge gap between the wealthy and the poor. The Ladies Relief Society, Seattle's very first charity, was dedicated to "united systematic benevolent work" on behalf of Seattle's increasing disadvantaged population. "They were particularly interested in the children left destitute by the death of one or both parents."

The family names of the women who started The Ladies Relief Society read like a Seattle street map; Yesler, Minor, Ferry, Fulton and Leary are among them. The orphanage opened in 1886 in a house constructed for the purpose on two lots donated by David and Louisa Denny on their homestead. The northeast corner of The Armory (Center House) marks the spot.

In 1905, a large wooden building housing 100 children went up at the top of Queen Anne. The infirmary and laundry cottage was constructed at about the same time. Money was raised from a variety of sources, including surplus relief funds from Seattle's 1889 fire. The large wooden building was replaced twice: once in 1932 by a brick fireproof edifice and then again in the 1960s by smaller buildings. McGraw Cottage, the sole survivor from the early Queen Anne period, took that name in 1940 when it became a home for girls.

Over the course of its 130-year history, the Seattle Children's Home mirrored evolving ideas about what is best for disadvantaged children. By the 1930s, people had concluded that foster care and accelerated adoption provided better environments for youths to flourish.

The change largely ended 200 years of putting children without families in orphanages. In the 20th century, the availability of birth control and the steep decline in unwanted pregnancies also saw a decrease in the number of children in need. In the 1930s, the home shifted its emphasis from orphans to troubled children, but institutionalization did not meet their needs either, and outpatient care made residential buildings underused.

In the charity's second century, it provided comprehensive treatment and services to troubled youth. By the time the home merged with Navos in 2012, it had become a comprehensive mental health facility for children and young adults and no longer required the Queen Anne buildings to meet its mission goals.

McGraw Cottage is one of the oldest surviving institutional buildings on Queen Anne. Its massing, pyramidal roof and the pretty frieze that runs under the edge of the roof on all sides show signs of the neo-classical Colonial Revival style of architecture. The unusually wide metopes, the triglyphs and the traditional guttae below them playfully interrupt the run of the frieze and also point to the neo-classical Colonial Revival style. In coming months when the Landmarks Preservation Board evaluates McGraw Cottage, it should find that the building's social rather than its architectural history provides far more important reasons for designating it a City of Seattle landmark.

There are probably no other extant buildings in Seattle that document so clearly one hundred years of changes in women's lives and in how society views orphanages and child and mental healthcare. The cottage is exceptional, however, not because it was founded by newly rich pioneer women, but because it is a singular reminder of the struggles in American society to address the needs of the victims of the huge and sadly growing gap between the rich and the poor. It deserves landmark designation.

A version of this article appeared in the *QAMag News*, but following its publication, at its December 18, 2013 meeting, the Design Review Committee asked developers to show an alternative design shifting the concentration of buildings away from the east side of the site. Such a design might require the demolition of McGraw Cottage. We'll be watching!

President's Letter
By Michael Herschensohn, PhD.

The Society's Board of Directors joins me in wishing you a very Happy New Year. As we watch our Urban Village (on Queen Anne Avenue North just outside my office window) take shape, we understand more fully the importance of preserving our neighborhood history and the buildings that tell its stories.

I've detailed some of our great achievements over the past year, including buildings preserved, tours conducted, archives better protected and great publicity for the society in regular articles in the *Queen Anne Magnolia News*. One success stands out, and we have Leanne Olson, chair of our Landmarks Committee, and Char Eggleston, my predecessor as president, to thank for it. It is the recreation of the Elfrieda Apartment House on the southwest corner of Crockett and Queen Anne Avenue North. We knew from developer and society member Joe Geivett that the reincarnated Elfrieda would not look exactly like the old one. The new fenestration on the first floor and the two storeys recessed on the roof were no surprises.

Elfrieda Apartment House

The surprise is that, quite contrary to our historic preservation principles, Elfrieda looks great. Joe and his partners repurposed historic brick to recreate the building's decorative patterns. They skinned the parts of the building and set them back above the Elfrieda so the historic palimpsest is clearly readable. They respected the bold wooden cornice that capped the original structure. Finally, they stepped down the Queen Anne Avenue façades from their high point at Howe Street so that Elfrieda dominates the site as a gem anchoring its massive accoutrements to the ground. The society and the entire Queen Anne community is grateful to Leanne and Char for nominating the building as a city landmark and, after the Landmarks Board rejected the nomination, for shouldering the responsibility of convincing Joe to save what he could.

Let's all toast Leanne at the society's next pubic meeting at St. Paul's Episcopal Church on Wednesday, January 22. Maybe if we are lucky, Char Eggleston will show up to celebrate too!

Show Your Support With Membership Dues

Your membership dues keep the Queen Anne Historical Society a vital part of the community.

With member support the society is able to plan stimulating public meetings; publish an informative bi-monthly newsletter, *The Cobblestone*; conduct tours for adults and school children; maintain a dynamic website; identify and defend historic properties at risk; and support an archive of documents and images about Queen Anne history.

Membership follows the calendar year, so if you haven't sent back your dues for 2014, consider doing it now. That way you will always be informed about society activities and participate!

"KINNEAR HOME"

Kim's Musings: Central Church of the Nazarene

By Kim Turner, Chair of Research Committee

In our ongoing reflection of the neighborhood churches, one that I attended for several years comes to mind. This is the former Central Church of the Nazarene, located at 6th Avenue North and Roy Street.

The church was first located in the Eagle's Auditorium, at 7th Avenue, between Pike and Union Streets, downtown. The opening services there were conducted by the pastor Rev. Alpin M. Bowes on October 16, 1927. The church owned a small building at Aurora and North 45th Street, but it was unsuitable as a church. On March 8, 1928, Rev. Bowes announced that a new building would be constructed, a centrally located tabernacle. A tent was erected on 7th Avenue North and East Roy Street, which was used during the following summer. Construction began on August 6, 1928, for the new church, which was to cost $30,000. It was located on the corner of 6th North and Valley Street, rather than Roy Street. The new church seated 750 persons and opened October 1, 1928. The dedication was held November 11, following the opening of the church on November 9, 1928.

Of the pastors, the following is of note: Rev. Bowes died in November of 1930, and was succeeded by Rev. E. E. Wordsworth. The latter's son, John, lived into his 90s, and died a few years ago.

John's daughter, Joanne, was a Queen Anne graduate in 1959. E. E. Wordsworth served from 1931 until June 1935. He was succeeded by Rev. A. G. Crockett, who left for California, then by Rev. B. V. Seals in July 1938.

When I attended the church from 1952 to 1957, it seemed quite new. The soft orange brickwork looked as if it were newly laid. The church continued in that location until the 1970s when a newer, larger church was built in the north end for the full congregation. The church became the City Four-Square Church, which it continues as today. It annexed the adjoining buildings all the way to Aurora Avenue and is thriving.